Vital Statistics Implements New Reporting System

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On January 1, the Center for Health and Environmental Statistics (CHES) implemented a web-enabled Vital Statistics data system. Entitled Vital Statistics Integrated Information System (VSIIS), the new software moves the Center a major step forward in electronically recording vital events such as births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and abortions.

Implementation of the new system marks the culmination of a two-year planning effort by CHES to update its data system and incorporate new business processes into the administration of vital records in Kansas.

The VSIIS approach uses a secure web portal called VRV Web to allow hospitals, physicians, court clerks, and other authorized users to enter and submit vital record information electronically.

While CHES has electronically recorded births for several years, the PC-based approach was antiquated and not directly networked with the state. Hospitals began using the new system to record births within hours of the new year starting. Birth clerks accessed the secure web server and began entering birth data in real time. Once birth clerks completed data entry, the server checked the information for unacceptable answers. The hospital completed the process by printing a paper copy of the completed birth record. Once received by the state the paper copy is electronically linked to the previously entered data.

Funeral directors, the first step in the two-part process of recording deaths, also began using VSIIS for reporting fact of death information within days of the new system going live. Full implementation of the mortality reporting component is a few years away, as the system will need to integrate cause of death information from physicians and coroners.

The new VSIIS system has a number of advantages. Reporting vital events in a more timely fashion will reduce the potential for fraud. Families will be able to get birth and death certificates faster. Information entered into the system will be more accurate, as automated proofing reduces errors.

The new system incorporates information from recently revised birth and death certificates. The new certificates ask additional medical questions, enabling researchers to better gauge health issues and identify disparities among racial and ethnic subgroups in the population.